

I. C. I. R. I. BULLETIN

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How Well Do Your Pupils Read?

by

Gertrude H. Williams

(Chairman of the Research Committee)

The significance of the title of this article lies in one little word. Of course your pupils are able to read. Perhaps most of them appear to be making satisfactory progress with this learning process. But have you ever considered the importance of actually knowing if they could read better if you gave them the opportunity?

To achieve acceptable instructional goals in reading, more than systematic training in the basic skills is required. There should be a definite and continuous plan for insuring a more productive type of instruction through scientific improvement.

An Outstanding Educational Potential

Few teachers realize the extent of the contribution that can be made by them in the improvement of reading instruction. Most educators are agreed that valuable teaching techniques for dealing successfully with learning deficiencies can be skillfully investigated by properly qualified teachers. This critical analysis of teaching experience is of inestimable worth in the solving of educational problems.

Good, Barr, and Scates (2) have indicated a keen, active and contemporary interest in this dynamic potential to educational method. They state: "More recently there has emerged the idea that classroom teachers must not only make use of scientific methods and know the technical background of teaching, but should also be encouraged to participate in the derivation of this very scientific background itself. This

International Council Announces Plans for March Meeting

On Wednesday, March 1, 1950, at 2:00 P.M., I.C.I.R.I. will sponsor a meeting on the theme Differentiated Instruction in Reading. The meeting has been arranged in conjunction with the American Association of School Administrators convention in Atlantic City. The place of the meeting will be announced in the A.A.S.A. program and in the next issue of the I.C.I.R.I. Bulletin.

Many phases of the problem of differentiated instruction in reading will be considered. Dr. Emmett A. Betts, Director of the Reading Clinic, Temple University, Philadelphia, will address the group on Approaches to Differentiated Guidance in Reading.

A panel discussion will follow Dr. Betts' address. The topic of this portion of the program is Meeting the Problems of Differentiated Instruction in Reading. Administrative and curricular problems as well as questions specifically related to reading will be part of the discussion. Members of the panel will be: Dr. Walter W. Cook, Professor of Education, University of Minnesota; Dr. Arthur I. Gates, Teachers College, Columbia University; Dr. William S. Gray, Professor of Education, University of Chicago; Miss Sallie Kate Kims, Elementary Supervisor, Parker School District, Greenville, South Carolina; Dr. Gerald Yoakam, Professor of Education, University of Pittsburgh.

Dr. Nila Banton Smith, I.C.I.R.I. President, will preside. The meeting is open to all who wish to attend. All members will be anxious to have the opportunity to hear this fine group of speakers. Tell your friends about the meeting, too.

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How Well Do Your Pupils Read? (continued from Page 1)

idea is sound psychologically and fully in accord with our democratic school of philosophy."

In a recent article on the evaluation of current reading methods, Traxler (4) suggests the urgent need of objective teacher appraisal and "long-term cooperative studies" for improving the developmental reading programs among schools and colleges.

Knapp (3) maintains that the teacher's knowledge of a variety of reading methods is not sufficient to enable middle and upper grade students to do satisfactory reading in the content fields. She feels that "the crucial test is to be aware of the function of these techniques in the learning process and to be able to select the particular technique for the particular child."

In a recent yearbook, Anderson (1) defines professional competency in terms of active awareness of a broad concept of appraisal,—"one which embraces the continuous collecting and recording of all sorts of evidence relating to development in and through reading."

The I.C.I.R.I. Research Committee

The Research Committee of the I.C.I.R.I. is sponsoring, at the present time,

a program of investigation which is two-fold in nature. Its prospectus includes summaries of current research reported in outstanding educational and psychological publications, as well as brief but concise reviews of individual and group experiments by classroom teachers, principals, and supervisory officers. It is with this latter phase of the research program that this appeal is specifically concerned.

Needed Educational Evidence

The process of reading to learn in the classroom is vital to the wholesome development of the individual child. Its investigation would seem to merit the immediate and constant attention of teachers engaging in research.

A number of professional books and magazines offer many helpful suggestions for reporting research or experimental practices in reading and other areas. Stimulation can be derived, also, from personal experiences and ideas that could be of value to others. The careful reading and analysis of good research articles, already published, can offer suggestive patterns of development. In addition, a comprehensive review of basic research methods is necessary for systematic guidance in assembling ideas and pertinent data.

The opportunities for classroom experimentation are unlimited for a large number of teachers and administrators with research training and imagination. Within the schools, a challenging advantage is offered for long-period studies in situations where the significant aspects of learning patterns can be observed. Only through continuous and systematic appraisal can the teaching of the basic skills be refined for purposes of more effective learning.

The appraisal of classroom learning has always been faced with stimulating problems in curative as well as developmental reading. Their criteria have fostered a desirable adjustment to the demands of changing reading requirements.

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PRACTICAL AIDS FOR GROUPING

Determining Achievement Level and Needs

Before the teacher can plan a program differentiated in terms of individual needs, she must discover the needs and the achievement levels of her pupils. One means of discovering needs and determining the level of achievement is the administration of an informal reading inventory. Such an inventory, prepared from any graded reading materials, can be used on an individual or a group basis (1,2).

To prepare an informal inventory a teacher needs no special materials. A series of basal readers, graded texts in the content areas, or graded current events materials may be used. From each level of material a short selection is chosen. If the inventory is to be given individually, two selections at each level should be used, one for oral reading at sight and one for silent reading. In a group inventory, one selection at each level is read silently.

Children are observed as they read these materials, watched for signs of difficulty and frustration. After the reading, comprehension is checked by both factual and inferential type questions.

Usually, children can read at a higher level under teacher guidance than they can "on their own." The level at which children read under teacher guidance is called the instructional reading level. The level at which children read "on their own" is called the independent reading level.

The independent reading level is the highest level at which the child can read with full understanding and freedom from frustration. The reading is done without tension movements, lip movement, finger pointing, and other evidences of difficulty. Silent reading is characterized by a relatively fast rate of comprehension and absence of vocalization. Oral re-reading is characterized by rhythm, accurate interpretation of punctuation, accurate pronunciation of more than 99% of the words, and a conversational tone. At the independent level, the reading is fluent. The child practices good reading habits.

The instructional level is the highest level at which the child can read satisfactorily under teacher supervision in a group situation. For normal progress, this reading has the same characteristics as independent reading, with one exception. The child may require help on the recognition of no more than 5% of the words. If he must have help on more than one word in twenty, his comprehension bogs down. He becomes frustrated.

By using the materials and procedures of an informal reading inventory, the teacher may appraise hearing comprehension. The only difference in the procedure is that the teacher reads to the children from graded materials. Comprehension is appraised by means of factual and inferential questions, as in the reading inventory.

When the teacher has estimated the independent and instructional levels of her pupils, she has a valid basis for grouping. In addition she has, in the process of observation during the inventory, had an opportunity to diagnose the specific needs of each pupil.

How else can information about a child's reading level be useful? It is valuable information for the librarian to have as she guides children in the selection of books for recreational reading and reference materials. Parents who want to provide reading materials for their children can choose appropriate books and magazines. In short, in every situation in which the child is called upon to read, his level of achievement must be taken into consideration.

For additional help in the preparation and administration of informal inventories, these references may be consulted: Betts, Emmett A. Foundations of Reading Instruction. New York: American Book Company, 1946. My Weekly Reader, Teacher's Edition, Section Two, Edition Number Four, (Volume XXXI, Number 4, October 3-7, 1949). American Education Press.

PRACTICAL AIDS

Informal Appraisal of Word Recognition Abilities

Informal tests of word recognition, as an aid in the appraisal of the child's reading level, are invaluable in the teacher's analysis program. There are many instances when the classroom teacher would like to have a quick method of determining the child's present reading level. Differentiation of reading instruction to meet the child's needs cannot be done unless the teacher has first determined what these needs are. Since accurate word recognition skills provide the basis for independent reading, especially at the elementary school level, an analysis of these skills will give the teacher a fairly accurate gauge of the level at which the child is capable of functioning independently in reading, and the level where instruction should be initiated.

An informal word recognition check can be prepared, without cost to the teacher, in the following manner:

1. From the word list at each level, in a basal series of readers, take a random sampling of words to be used as test targets. (20 or 25 words are usually sufficient. In a word list of 200 new words, every tenth word would represent an adequate sampling.)

2. Type these in a vertical column on plain white bond, using a separate sheet for each grade section. Provision should be made for recording the responses on a carbon or mimeographed copy for more detailed analysis. The following form is suggested:

Stimulus	Pre-Primer Level	
	Flash	Untimed

1. a

2. the

3. The words at each level are then "flashed" to the child by using two 3 x 5 index cards with an exposure of approximately one-half second on each word. If the cards are placed edge to edge in vertical alignment over the words, the

lower card is then pulled down to expose the first word; the top card follows closely after, thus ending the exposure. If the child does not recognize the word, he is given an opportunity to study the word in an untimed exposure. Responses are recorded in the blank spaces provided on the teacher's copy. Three possible responses will be made: a refusal (0), a substitution (recorded as given), or, the correct response (✓). The teacher then proceeds to the next word on the list, etc., until ten successive errors have been recorded, or the entire test administered.

In general, 95 percent accuracy should be considered indicative of independence at the level being tested. Usually these tests are not valid measures of reading ability above the third grade levels, since children at the higher levels may have accurate word recognition skills but lack sufficient word concepts to understand the meaning of the word or the context in which it is presented. Additional tests of the informal reading type would be needed to detect needs in concept development.

A test of this type may also be used as a check on the retention of new words learned in the child's reading vocabulary at the conclusion of any period of instruction, i.e., quarterly, at the end of each term, or when a book has been completed as a check on readiness for the next higher level in the series.

Additional aids in checking word recognition skills may be found in:

Betts, Emmett A., The Foundation of Reading Instruction, New York, American Book Company, 1946. Chap. XXIV.

Durell, Donald D., Improvement of Basic Reading Abilities, Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York, World Book Co., 1940. Chapters 2 and 13.

Gates, Arthur I., The Improvement of Reading, New York, The Macmillan Co., 1947. Chap. 8 and Appendix 2.

Gray, William S., On Their Own in Reading. Chicago, Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1948.

PRACTICAL AIDS

Appraising Readiness

Readiness is a factor in the success of reading instruction at all levels. Mental, emotional, and physical readiness have equal implications at primary, upper-intermediate, and junior-high-school years. The problems are not the same; learner needs vary. However, a differentiated instructional program must consider readiness not alone as an initial readiness for the reading program, but for specific levels and for specific language-development activities.

Appraising readiness need not be a costly process. It is the purpose of this article to point out factors which must be considered and to suggest means by which they can be appraised.

Some of the determinants of readiness, and hence of grouping for instruction at all levels, appear to be:

Background of Experience: Dr. Nila Banton Smith says that the teacher can insure meaningful concepts for the word symbols to be encountered by:

- (1) Ascertaining experiences needed,
- (2) Providing first-hand experiences,
- (3) Using a variety of pictures and picture games.

Social Adjustment: Gates says that indifference to reading on one hand, and over-anxiety on the other, may contribute to the development of reading problems. Positive aids to social adjustment within the province of every teacher include these:

Cooperation with the home to:

- (1) eliminate hostility, over-protection, and sibling rivalry;
- (2) to eliminate conflict in purpose and desire between the parents, the parent(s) and child, and between the home and school;
- (3) to provide the security necessary to optimum personality development and adjustment.

Interests and Attitudes: Interests are of prime importance, in motivating initial reading activities, in determining membership in groups, and in determining

activities or experiences around which the reading program may be developed. The appraisal of interests may be conducted informally through discussion groups, through noting hobbies and playground activities, or more formally through interest inventories which may be obtained through various testing bureaus.

Experience with senior-high-school and adult students in remedial, corrective, and developmental activities establishes the possibility of high interest in materials of very low readability-level. Motivation and presentation are factors, particularly in the remedial and corrective phases of the reading program.

Other determinants of readiness, commonly investigated at the first reader level, but too often neglected at the upper levels, are:

Mental Maturity: A mental age of about six and one-half years is usually considered desirable for beginning reading instruction. While a qualified psychometrician is required to administer mental tests such as the Binet, an approximate determination of MA may be obtained through (1) the use of non-language intelligence tests, (2) an evaluation of quantity and quality of vocabulary and (3) an appraisal of hearing comprehension.

Visual Comprehension and Discrimination: The ability to interpret a picture sequence is another guide to readiness. This ability may be developed, and readiness promoted, by having the child classify pictures of various objects into categories. Example: Provide the child with pictures of girls, boys, men, and women. These might first be arranged as (1) boys and girls, grouped as children, (2) men and women, grouped as 'grown people', and (3) boys and girls, men and women, grouped as people.

Most reading readiness tests have a section designed to evaluate the ability of the child to differentiate between letters and between word forms. (See the Van Wagenen Reading Readiness Test.) The utility of

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PRACTICAL AIDS

READING AND SPELLING

Other things being equal, differentiated instruction is effective to the degree that the learner's general language development is uniform. Auditory and visual discrimination skills are prerequisites to success with reading and writing. Reading ability is a pre-requisite to writing, for a child cannot learn to spell words that are not in his reading vocabulary. Furthermore, learnings in spelling can buttress learnings in the listening, speaking, and reading facets of language.

Readiness for spelling. Children must have at least first reader level reading ability before they are ready for systematic guidance in spelling. This general relationship between reading and spelling appears to exist whether the learner is six, nine, or fifteen years of age.

To demonstrate this relationship, the teacher uses informal reading and spelling inventories. The instructional reading level--appraised by the use of materials graded in readability--provides a satisfactory basis for estimating readiness for spelling instruction. In general, the child who is ready for spelling instruction can spell at least seventy-five per cent of the words sampled from a well-constructed second grade speller.

Reading Achievement. At all school levels, reading achievement is one of the bases for spelling. A child is not likely to have primer level reading ability and second grade level spelling ability. In general, the level of spelling achievement does not exceed the instructional level in reading.

Every authority in the language arts agrees that instruction in reading must be differentiated. Likewise, all authorities agree that instruction in spelling must be differentiated.

Informal Spelling Tests. A teacher-made test of spelling achievement is

probably one of the most practical measures to use as the basis for grouping. It is simple and direct.

At a given grade level, a sampling of twenty-five words is adequate. For all practical purposes, a twenty-five word sample is as adequate as a thirty, fifty, or one-hundred word test.

For general surveys, a ten or fifteen word sample may be used to screen out children in need of special help. However, for diagnostic teaching and grouping the twenty-five word sample should be used.

Selection of spelling words. In a second-grade basal speller, there are usually about 250 words. To obtain a sample of twenty-five words, every tenth word is selected.

In a fourth grade basal speller, there are usually about 500 words. To obtain a sample of twenty-five words, every twentieth word is selected.

To determine which words are to be selected at a given speller level, do these things:

1. Determine the number of words given in the weekly spelling lists in the book. (e.g., 250 at the second grade level or 500 at the fourth grade level.)

2. Divide the number of words at a given grade level by twenty-five, the number of words in the sample. (e.g., $500 \div 25 = 20$.)

If a sample of twenty-five words is to be taken from a 500 word list, the first word is selected from the first twenty words in the list. For example, this word may be the first, the tenth, the twentieth, or any one of the first twenty words.

The second word for the sampling is obtained by counting to the twentieth word after the first one selected. For example, a twenty-five word sampling is taken from a list of 500 words. If the second word is taken as the first word for the sample, the twenty-second word is taken as the second word.

Each succeeding word in the sample is obtained by counting from the last word to the twentieth. Following the above example, the sample would be obtained

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IS MY CLASS NORMAL?

VARIATIONS IN READING ACHIEVEMENT

Many teachers are perturbed when evaluation reveals that pupils at a given grade show marked differences in reading ability. These variations in pupil achievement may become a source of frustration, especially after much time and effort has been devoted to instruction. However, a cursory glance at research in this field should dispel the illusion that a pupil can be fitted to a grade standard. Differences in background, experiences, capacities, abilities, needs, and interests, must, of necessity, lead to wide variations in reading achievement within any grade level.

Betts stresses the fact that this heterogeneity between pupils is increased by education. Since pupils vary so much in their abilities, it becomes evident that the range of reading achievement increases from grade to grade. A study by Betts (1) revealed that the range of reading ability at the fifth grade varied from pre-primer level to twelfth grade level, and the rate of reading ranged from approximately 30 words to over 800 words per minute. Elsewhere, Betts has shown that at the first grade, reading ability may range from "zero" to third level and at the third grade it may range from "zero" to sixth level.

In a study made to determine the range of reading abilities in typical classrooms, Durrell (2) reported the following results:

Grade	Range	
	Low	High
2	1.0	5.9
3	1.4	8.7
4	1.0	9.5
5	1.9	10
6	1.9	10

He also found that wide variations in specific reading skills existed at different grade levels among pupils of the same chronological age. Durrell says, "Children in the same grade will differ greatly in

their reading abilities even though they have received a similar amount and type of reading instruction.....The range of abilities increases in each higher grade."

Russell (3) is in complete agreement with the views expressed by the above writers. He says, "Every reading survey that has ever been made suggests that it is usual and normal to find a wide range of reading abilities at any one grade level and that the range tends to increase as the children advance through school." He points out that the normal range in reading ability at the second grade runs from primer to fourth grade ability, and at the fifth grade the differences will extend from second grade to about eighth grade reading ability. Russell stresses the fact that these differences are typical and not unusual.

It is readily evident that the authors cited are in complete agreement cited are in complete agreement on the following conclusions: (1) a wide range of abilities exists at any grade level, and (2) education increases these individual differences. Therefore, the teacher should not be alarmed at the "normal" spread in the classroom, but should provide instruction to meet these individual differences. The problem, then, is not to bring the pupils up to a hypothetical "grade" level, but to develop each child according to his capabilities and needs.

References:

- (1) Betts, Emmett A. Foundations of Reading Instruction. New York: American Book Company, 1946.
- (2) Durrell, Donald D. Improvement of Basic Reading Abilities. Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York: World Book Company, 1940.
- (3) Russell, David. Children Learn to Read. Boston, Mass: Ginn and Company, 1949.

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL NEWS

ACTS OF ASSEMBLY

The following Acts of Assembly were approved at the annual May business meeting, May 7, 1949:

1. That the latest revision of Robert's Rules of Order shall determine procedure of the I.C.I.R.I. and its chartered groups and councils where no other rule, act, by-law, and the like or constitutional section applies.

2. That when any meeting of the I.C.I.R.I. or its chartered groups or councils, has been legally called and reasonable notification has been given, the members attending such a meeting, shall constitute a quorum.

3. That the fiscal year of the International Council and all its chartered groups and councils begin each January 1st.

4. That the Executive Board may collect dues, not less than one dollar nor more than two dollars per year from each active member to defray the expenses of the International Council. Additional charges may be made to defray the expense of publishing a journal.

5. That the Executive Board, by majority vote, may fix or change the number of members on each of the permanent Executive Committees.

6. That the Executive Board set the time and place of the triennial assemblies in conjunction with some educational organization of large memberships.

7. That the permanent Legislative Committee be authorized to make rules to encourage and facilitate the work of the I.C.I.R.I.

8. That dues for sustaining membership be \$10.00 per year.

9. That copies of all Acts of Assembly and the rules of the Permanent Legislative Committee be filed with the Executive Secretary, the permanent Legislative Committee Chairman and the Judicial Committee Chairman.

10. That when members of a board council, or study group of the I.C.I.R.I. must ballot to make a decision but cannot convene to discuss and vote, the chairman or secretary of such board, council or study group shall be charged with arranging for discussion and balloting by mail and with safe-guarding copies of the letters that are concerned in the discussion and the final ballot.

11. That when decisions must be made by scattered members or officers, the member or officer indicate his or her decision by a signed statement which shall be filed with the secretary or chairman of the group, council, or board.

12. That the Past-President inaugurate the new officers at the first opportunity after election.

READING AND SPELLING
(continued from Page 6)

by beginning with word number 2. The sample then would use numbers 2, 22, 42, 62, 82, and so on, until the twenty-five word sample is obtained.

Number of Samplings. How many tests a teacher constructs depends upon the range of abilities in the classroom. A second grade teacher would need tests for at least the second and third grade levels. A fifth grade teacher would need sampling tests at each level from grade two to eight, inclusive.

Administration of test. The administration of each test is done simply. There are three steps:

1. The teacher pronounces the word in a normal conversational tone.

2. The teacher uses the word in a sentence that brings out its use, or meaning.

3. The teacher pronounces the word again.

4. The children write the word.

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EXPERIENCES IN GROUPING

Mississippi School Initiates
New Plan for Grouping

Grace Lee, Principal
Camp School
Hattiesburg, Mississippi

Realizing its responsibility for guiding the development of children's ability to read, and knowing that children do not grow in reading ability at the same rate, the Camp School at Hattiesburg, Mississippi, is not attempting to hold all the children together by grades when teaching basic reading skills.

Many plans for teaching basic skills have been tried--some successful, some not successful. Our plan calls for the classification of all pupils in grades three, four, five, and six into six groups. (The groups will be called A, B, C, D, E, and F for convenience.) In the past, each teacher divided her pupils into two or three groups to be taught in her own room.

Three criteria are being used for the classification. They are:

1. Reading grade equivalent based on the Stanford Reading Test, Revised.
2. I.Q. obtained from Kuhlmann-Anderson Intelligence Test.
3. The judgment of past teachers.

Since pupils' reading abilities are constantly changing, the grouping will be flexible. If at any time a teacher is convinced that a child needs to be in another group, he will be shifted to that group.

The grouping will be done tactfully and intelligently. We will try to avoid any tension in children or parents by treating reading difficulties as normal rather than giving a feeling that something is fundamentally wrong with the children.

No child will be placed in a group more than two levels above or more than two levels below his own grade group. For example a third grade pupil will go no higher than group D; a fourth grade pupil no higher than group E; a fifth grade pupil no lower than group B; a sixth grade pupil no lower than group C.

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How I Grouped My Grade One Pupils
by

Mildred M. Frame
Toronto, Canada

At the beginning of the school term, it is the task of a Grade One teacher to appraise her pupils readiness for reading and to divide her class accordingly. We know that a reading readiness program is preventive of future remedial problems and may last from a few days to the whole year. In order to appraise the class I try to learn certain things about each pupil:-

1. What is the level of his general intelligence?
2. What are his special mental abilities?
 - (a) visual memory and visual discrimination
 - (b) auditory discrimination;-
 - Does he hear rhyming words?
 - Does he hear likenesses in words with the same initial sounds?
3. What is his language background? His experience background? Does he speak clearly, free of most substitutions? Does he offer to take part in conversation? Has he been to the zoo, the fair, the circus, a department store? Has he been for a train ride?
4. Has he a desire to read, or any need to learn?

I found the answer to some of these questions in the results of the standardized tests given to our pupils in June. Over six thousand five hundred children were screened through a five-test battery at that time. A city wide median was computed for total score and for each individual score.

The analysis of test one indicated in three levels the pupils who did not notice differences. The pupils were shown rows of objects with one object different on each row. Only a very immature child would be unable to find the one that was different. The second level tested symbols and the third

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EXPERIENCES IN GROUPING

How I Grouped My Grade Four Class

by
Johanne Baltruweit
Toronto, Canada

Grouping is based on the premise that every pupil should read at his own level; we must begin where the learner is. As I realized that within my own class there would be a distribution of several grades in reading achievement, I planned to place the children into several groups according to their reading ability.

First, of all, I made a thorough preliminary study of the A.D.P. cards, not only to learn as much as possible about the child, his vision and his hearing, but also to secure a general picture of the distribution of reading achievement in the class. As a preliminary basis, then, I listed the name of each pupil showing the previous teacher's estimate of his reading ability.

From the beginning I tried to secure the interest and co-operation of the pupils. I aroused their enthusiasm by saying to them, "We have a number of interesting books in our classroom, a few in each group. We are going to find out from our reading, just which book is most suited to each person. In the end, we shall have a number of groups of children, each group working together with a different book."

To make a tentative estimate of each child's instructional reading level, I taught the class several lessons from a grade four basal reader. During the silent first reading, I recorded such symptoms of frustration as fingers pointing, vocalization and frowning, and determined those for whom this grade four material was probably too difficult. During the oral rereading of the selection I noted those who read fluently, with good phrasing, with accurate pronunciation, and in a conversational tone and decided they should be given reading instruction at the grade four level if they understood what they read. I checked comprehension with both factual and inferential-type questions.

As a result I divided the pupils into three tentative groups. The most advanced readers were given a grade four
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How I Divided My Grade Seven Class

by
R. L. Burns
Toronto, Canada

Reading is an aid to learning composed of an integration of many skills. Consequently, to improve a child's reading ability, one must ascertain in which skills he is deficient and direct one's teaching toward that end. For that reason, when I get a class in September, I spend the first few weeks testing various skills. Incidentally, I pay no attention to I.Q.'s or previous marks in reading until I have completed my grouping for I prefer to approach the testing with an open mind. Having made my classification, I may consult the A.D.P. card of a child whom I have graded very low to compare the previous teacher's records with my own and to discover the pupil's intelligence quotient. If my findings and those on the card are at variance, I must give that child other careful tests.

Since oral reading in itself is not a reliable criterion of comprehension ability, I test widely in silent reading comprehension first, and I test for three things; (1) ability to grasp the general significance read; (2) ability to grasp details; (3) ability to make inferences and draw conclusions. I use only the authorized reader, and, the McCall-Crabbs Reading Test Lessons, a publication of Teachers' College, Columbia University. Each test consists of a paragraph or two followed by a series of unclassified completion exercises. Exercises of this type are not difficult to construct, and certain simpler selections from the reader, such as "Bankis and Phileman", "White Beauty", and "A Rainy Day in Camp", provide quite suitable material.

From the testing just described, I get not only a classification of skill defects, as I have mentioned, but also a grouping of my class into: (1) those with a high degree of comprehension ability; (2) those with a low degree of comprehension ability;
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Appraising Readiness
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these reading readiness tests is not confined to the first reader level. They should be administered to each child who shows an inability to learn to read through the normal visual-auditory method.

Auditory Comprehension and Discrimination: While an audiometric examination is desirable in all cases, appraisal of hearing acuity may be made with the low-voice test, the watch-tick test, and the tuning-fork test.

A simple test of hearing comprehension may be made by using stories from a carefully graded series of basal readers. Using both story-type and factual-type material, use a short selection of reading material at each level of difficulty with five or six questions for each selection. Prepare questions to test the child's ability to deal with questions related to his background of experience and memory for details, with vocabulary, and to read between the lines, (to perceive relationships.)

Beginning with the easiest material, read the selection to the child and ask the questions you have prepared; proceed to succeeding levels. The child's hearing comprehension level is the highest level at which he can answer 75% of the questions.

Readiness can be appraised with a minimum of expenditure. A hearing comprehension test can be constructed without cost from any series of graded materials. One five cent Van Wagenen Reading Readiness test can be used to test a whole class. Teachers cannot afford not to appraise readiness.

Sources of additional information:

Betts, Emmett A., Foundations of Reading Instruction. New York: The American Book Company, 1946. (The Nature of Readiness, Pp. 103-247. Discovering Specific Reading Needs, Pp. 438-487)

Gates, Arthur I., The Improvement of Reading. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947. (Testing, Pp. 41-75, Intelligence, Vision, Hearing and Other Factors Which Influence Reading, Pp. 76-119).

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How Well Do Your Pupils Read
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Their conclusions have become "Signposts" in the balanced and continuous development of reading skills and abilities, from kindergarten through college.

Toward Better Instructional Practices

The discerning classroom teacher accepts, with enthusiasm, a dual responsibility in the field of education. Not only is the teaching of the child considered a primary function, but the critical evaluation of methods, techniques, and practices, as well.

Will YOU, too, recognize this concept of teaching experience? Will YOU accept the challenge to aid the advance of learning theory, as applied to reading instruction? WILL YOU HELP YOUR PUPILS TO READ BETTER?

References

1. Anderson, Harold, A. "Teacher-Education in the Field of Reading," Chapter XIII. The Forty-seventh Yearbook of the N.S.S.E., Part II. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1948.
2. Good, C. V., Barr, A. S., and Scates, D. E. The Methodology of Educational Research. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1941.
3. Knapp, Jessie. "Diagnosing and Correcting Reading Difficulties in the Middle and Upper Grades," Chapter XIII. Improving Reading in the Content Fields. Supplementary Educational Monograph, No. 62. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, (January, 1947).
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How I Grouped My Grade One Pupils (Continued from Page 9)

level, word forms. A superior child would have all the word forms correct. Five children low in this test needed graded exercises in this type of activity.

In test two the children has to choose a picture from a row of four pictures which illustrated a story the examiner had just told. Children had to listen well, observe well and remember well. I had nine pupils below the median in this test.

Test three showed which children could not see similarities in word forms. From four words they had to find the two alike. It was interesting to discover that some of the children who could not see differences could see likenesses.

Test four was the most difficult. Beside a picture were six partially similar words. A card showing the name of the object in the picture was exposed for ten seconds. From memory the children had to select the same word from the six beside the picture. Those who tested high on this test were well beyond early stages of reading readiness. To ask such pupils to discriminate differences in a row of little elephant pictures would be a waste of time.

Test five measured motor co-ordination, observation and the ability to delineate. Beside a picture the children had to draw a similar picture. Two of my pupils were low in this ability.

It seemed reasonable to suppose that the total score might be an indication of the level of general intelligence for some children. I arranged the total scores from highest to lowest and from these found the ones above the city median in all five tests. This indicated nine pupils who would form the core of my top group. From the remainder I found that ten had a total score above or near the city median but these were below in one or two of the individual tests. These were to form the basis of my second group. Six remaining pupils had scores below the city median and were below in three or four of the individual tests. In our school, children who were very low on this survey were

placed in another room where they have a longer and a more elementary readiness program.

There were three children who had not been tested. These were given informal tests and grouped from the results. There is one test I like to give all my pupils; i.e., drawing of the human figure. It indicates mental maturity in some children and serves as a check on my groupings. In these drawings I look for such things as these: head and body joined; arms or legs in more than one dimension; any one facial feature; hair or ears; indications of clothing; hands or feet; more facial features; more clothing, and good general proportion. A child who draws in profile is usually well developed.

The rest of my class was made up of five repeaters. It is said that 20% to 80% of reading vocabulary is forgotten during the long summer vacation by grade one children. These five pupils seemed to have forgotten most of their words. However, we started with a pre-primer they had not had the year before. One boy could not manage and was placed in Group two. As Group one is now reading their second pre-primer, these four repeaters have joined that group in most of their reading activities.

Within the main groups are many small groups. These are made up of pupils who are weak in particular areas as shown in the subtests or in observation. Special help is given to these pupils when appropriate readiness activities are in progress.

Executive Board Rules on Payment of Dues

At a meeting of the I.C.I.R.I. Executive Board held October 1, 1949, at the Hotel Hildebrecht in Trenton, New Jersey, the following ruling on payment of dues was made:

Dues for members at large (no ruling on local council dues) will cover membership and privileges for twelve calendar months from the date of receipt. Dues for the subsequent year will become payable on the first of the same month of that year.

Toronto Council Plans Meetings on Grouping

The Toronto and District Council for the improvement of Reading Instruction, an affiliated member of the International Council, has announced plans for its October and November meetings. The topics for these meetings have been planned in relation to the 1949-1950 I.C.I.R.I. theme, Differentiated Instruction.

On October 17 the group considered the problem "How to Group". Grade standards and the results of reading tests were discussed as factors to be considered in the establishing of groups. Actual methods of grouping were then presented as they had been worked out in three different classes.

"Teaching in Groups" is to be the theme of the November meeting. Three demonstrations with class groups will be presented. After the demonstrations, group discussions will be held by primary, intermediate and senior grade teachers.

Appraising Readiness (continued from Page 11)

McKee, Paul. The Teaching of Reading. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1948.

Reading Workshop of the American Book Company, Are Your Children Ready to Read. New York: The American Book Company, 1948. (Free)

Some standardized reading-readiness tests:

Betts, Emmett A., Ready to Read Tests. Meadville, Pa.: Keystone View Company, 1938. (Individual Tests)

Gates, Arthur I., Gates Reading Readiness Tests. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1939. (Group Tests)

Van Wagenen, M. J., Reading Readiness Test. Philadelphia, Pa. The Educational Test Bureau (3433 Walnut Street), 1938 (Individual)

Reading and Spelling (Continued from Page 8)

The child's spelling level. If a child makes a score of ninety per cent or higher at a given spelling level, that is his achievement level. (continued on Page 14, Column 1)

Mississippi School (Continued from Page 9)

The lowest level, Group A, will have only third and fourth grade pupils and the highest level, Group F, will have only fifth and sixth grade pupils. Another important phase of this grouping is the grade equivalent range. Group A ranges from 2.7 down and Group F from 7.0 above. The other groups, with very few exceptions, will have a range of one year, one month.

Each morning there will be a thirty-minute basic reading period. At this time each child will report to his reading teacher. All pupils in Group A go to one teacher, all in Group B to another teacher and so on.

With a smaller range of reading abilities, the teacher will be able to more for the individual pupil. However, regardless of any form of grouping there will always be individual differences to be considered. As the year progresses, evaluation of the new program will be carried on. Reports of the results of this work will be made.

Study Outlines Provided For Local Council Meetings

The program committee of the International Council has prepared a study guide for the use of local councils. A copy of this series of topics and questions to be considered is being distributed with the current bulletin.

Four general areas have been suggested for consideration under the year's theme, Differentiated Instruction. These areas are those which are being presented in this year's I.C.I.R.I. Bulletin. It is suggested that the questions raised and other related questions be the basis of the local groups' investigations of means of meeting individual needs in the classroom.

Other local groups are interested in what you are doing. Reports of your meetings may be sent to the Executive Secretary, Mr. Roy A. Kress, The Reading Clinic, Temple University, Philadelphia 22, Pennsylvania.

How I Grouped My Grade Four (Continued from Page 10)

basal reader with the intention of giving them a grade five reader soon. A second group began temporarily with a grade three basal reader. For the first few days these groups were reading at levels: 1. advanced grade four; 2. beginning grade four; 3. grade three.

As I taught these groups, I continued to observe and appraise individual comprehension, vocabulary difficulties, fluency in oral re-reading and signs of frustration. I noticed, for instance, three pupils whose interest lagged, who gazed about the room instead of enjoying the reading, who pointed to words, and did not understand what they read. Now, a fourth group of three pupils is enjoying the stories in a grade two reader, first level.

Although these four groups have been active for several weeks, I do not consider the grouping permanent. Continual appraisal of individual progress is needed throughout the year. Two boys who were frustrated in the grade four book are now making much better progress at the grade three level. To prepare a pupil for transference from one group to another, the children had been told that the groups were not permanent. The grade level of the text-books was neither disguised nor stressed. Beside, each group has its own importance with no stigma of inferiority. At Thanksgiving for instance, the "Eagles" who are using the grade three reader, Wide Wings, read to the rest of the class the story of the Pilgrim Fathers.

Each group, when its members are not at their seats, has a separate corner of the classroom where a tag is posted bearing the name of that group. There is great enthusiasm in our reading groups and this year promises to be a very happy year for us.

Reading and Spelling (Continued from Page 13)

If a child makes a score of seventy-five to ninety per cent, that is his instructional level. Groups are formed on the basis of instructional levels.

How I Grouped My Grade Seven (Continued from Page 10)

and a median group, neither very good nor very poor. I think of these groups as: (1) those reading above the grade seven level; (2) those above the grade seven level and (3) those just at the grade seven level.

Groups two and three need further testing. A child fails to grasp the general significance of a selection. Why does he fail? Another fails to grasp details. Why is this so? Some answers to these questions can be ascertained by an examination of their responses on the silent reading tests which I gave them. For example, one of the top three pupils in my last year's class scored only forty per cent on the silent reading tests. This warranted an investigation since it was so out of line with his scores in other subjects. Consultation with his previous teacher corroborated my findings. Examination of his test responses showed that although his response was always a nearly correct response, it was not the most correct. He needed training in comprehension skills. After some teaching of this type, the scores in his comprehension tests reached eighty per cent, a mark much more in line with that in his other subjects. By-the-way, this pupil was one of my best oral readers, obviously because his word recognition techniques and his comprehension were sufficiently accurate to permit him to read fluently.

Through the pupils' oral reading it is possible to observe many hindrances to satisfactory reading achievement, and, for that reason, I test each child in groups two and three orally, and individually. From several years of using this scheme, I find that, in my grade seven classes, the greatest impediments have been (1) lack of word recognition and (2) lack of proper phrasing.

A child may be weak in one, or in several skills, and, for that reason, will work one day with one group, another day with another, and so on. Moreover, a child may pass from one group to a higher one upon attaining a certain level of achievement. The grouping is very elastic.